

***Released Readings and Questions from the January 2007 English Language Arts
30–1 Diploma Examination***

I. Questions 1 to 5 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

This poem is accompanied by a commentary in Reading II that provides another poet’s analysis of the poem “Mother of the Groom.”

MOTHER OF THE GROOM

What she remembers
Is his glistening back
In the bath, his small boots
In the ring of boots at her feet.

5 Hands in her voided lap,
She hears a daughter welcomed.
It’s as if he kicked when lifted
And slipped her soapy hold.

10 Once soap would ease off
The wedding ring
That’s bedded forever now
In her clapping hand.

Seamus Heaney

Heaney, Seamus. “Mother of the Groom.” In *Wintering Out*. London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1972.

II. Questions 6 to 11 in your Questions Booklet are based on this commentary.

This commentary was written by the poet Don Coles as an analysis of the poem “Mother of the Groom” by Seamus Heaney.

HOW POEMS WORK

Seamus Heaney is a Nobel laureate who has lately been spending half of each year as a visiting professor at Harvard and the rest of it in his home in County Wicklow. He is so celebrated that a few months ago a British reviewer mentioned that it was time to stop writing about him and give the freed-up space to a few other Irish poets, if only so that we could get “a clearer sense of what is unique about his work.”

No need to mock that suggestion. Not all of Heaney’s work is so good as to merit shutting out the three or four other Irish poets who are among the universe’s best. A few of his poems, though, are that good, and the one you see here is one of them.

(Others: two of the “bog people” poems; a very short poem called *Widgeon*; and above all, maybe even above today’s poem, the supernaturally good *Sunlight*, part 1 of a two-part poem called *Mossbawn*, dedicated to the poet’s mother.)

Today’s poem is, however, perfect. (Q.: So how can *Sunlight* be better? A.: It’s longer, and also perfect.) If any 12-line poem has ever packed into itself as moving an account of the private thoughts of a woman during a minute or two of a particular day in her life — one in which her son is being married — I’ve not read it. I don’t think anybody else has read it either.

Talk about economy! The title tells us all we need to get us going; it frames the poem. Then come the opening images, which, without any prosing around, show us the mother’s memory of “his glistening back/ in the bath” — and also show us that “ring of boots at her feet.” This latter image, all on its own, pre-empts what in an average poem would have been heading straight for, a looming awful stanza of the “She thought of her other children, too, who were also, once, small” sort.

Next comes that “voided lap” — the never-healed loss that this poem is about, as tightly and roundly conveyed as the image itself. And now it’s speech time: She hears the trite toast to the bride, but her thoughts are still with that soapy little body. How could so much of life have slipped through her hands so fast? And already we’re at the ending: an image of quiet acceptance.

Her thoughts have been exact and solemn, they are beautiful in themselves, but what makes them unforgettable in their beauty is that she will never speak them. What makes the poem magical is that it speaks out of that silence. In doing so, it illuminates thought, our thought, perhaps lastingly. Without it, all that the watcher would have seen here is a “mother of the groom,” a woman sitting by herself and, at the end, clapping.

Don Coles

Coles, Don. “How Poems Work.” In *The Globe and Mail*, November 18, 2000, sec. D, p. 34. Reproduced with permission from Don Coles.

- III. Questions 12 to 19 in your Questions Booklet are based on this essay. Question 25 requires you to consider this reading together with Reading IV. Question 29 requires you to consider this reading together with readings IV and V.

Since when has culture been about genetics?

Last week, The Globe Review¹ reported on criticisms directed at Vancouver poet Robert Bringhurst over his new work of treatments of Haida² literature. Here, Bringhurst replies to his critics. He argues that no culture, native or
5 *otherwise, has exclusive rights over the interpretation of its own history.*



FRED LUM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

On Monday, Oct. 8, 1900, in the Haida village of Skidegate, an elderly Haida poet known as Skaay began to tell a story to two men in their 20s. One was a bilingual
10 Haida fisherman by the name of Henry Moody. The other was a linguist named John Swanton, who had been in town two weeks. Skaay spoke a couple of sentences, Moody repeated them slowly, enunciating with care, and Swanton wrote them in phonetic script. The three men worked this way all day, and the next day and the next. By the end of the month, Skaay had said what he wanted
15 to say in the foreigner's presence, and Swanton had filled 700 pages in his notebooks.

That was merely the beginning. When Swanton left the Haida country in the summer of 1901, he had 5,000 pages of his notebooks filled with Haida myths, histories and songs, spoken and sung by several dozen people. There is a rich
20 recorded oral literature in at least 100 other native North American languages, but none of them is richer than the literature that Swanton wrote down single-handedly in Haida in that one eventful year.

Ninety years later, in a university classroom, I had the first of several potent lessons in the politics of language on the British Columbia coast. An anthropologist
25 friend of mine, who was teaching at UBC, invited me to her class to talk about oral literature on the Northwest Coast. I spoke about the work of Skaay and other poets. Then I read some lines from one of Skaay's stories, using Swanton's phonetic Haida text.

Continued

¹*The Globe Review*—section of the *The Globe and Mail* newspaper, November 15, 1999

²*Haida*—a First Nations people who have inhabited the Queen Charlotte Islands off the coast of British Columbia and Prince of Wales Island off the coast of Alaska for at least 10 000 years

There was a Haida first-year student in the class. Until I came to the quotation, she was listening with interest. But when she heard what she
30 recognized as Haida coming from a non-Haida's mouth, she covered up her own mouth and bolted from the room, making it quite plain that she felt suddenly and violently ill.

Like many in this world, I was born to displaced parents and have lived in many countries. I have seen people shocked to hear a stranger speak a language
35 they believed he could not share, and other people frightened to hear neighbours speak an unfamiliar tongue. But not until that moment had I known that studying a language could be taken as an insult.

In retrospect, of course, the case was clear. The woman in the classroom did not herself speak Haida but had heard it and recognized the sounds. She also
40 knew that Haida was supposed to be her language and not mine. She knew that people who looked more or less like me had changed the world so that she, and others like her, did not speak it. Then a pale stranger stood there, reading classical Haida literature in the classroom, as if it were classical Latin or Greek. No problem whatsoever if it had been Greek or Latin, but it wasn't; it was Haida:
45 her precious lost possession. What could I be, in that case, but a thief? In fact the archthief: the one who stole the language of the Haida in much the way the Raven³ stole the light.

If she had known how poorly I spoke, and how hard I had worked for so fragile and partial a knowledge of Skaay's language, would her horror have been
50 lessened? Probably not. The knowledge that I spoke the language poorly would not have made it possible for her to speak it well. And knowing I had sweated for some years over semi-legible manuscripts to learn what little I knew would not have made her own tasks any easier.

Nearly nine years have passed since that encounter. In those nine years, I
55 have studied Haida literature almost daily. As I do so, I still routinely see that woman's shocked face in the corner of my mind. Skaay's face, since we do not have a photograph, is one I have to imagine. Hers is a face I will never forget.

In 1991, I published a book, *The Black Canoe*, about the sculpture of Bill Reid, who was my teacher and my friend. I did my best, in that book, to show
60 how the rich tradition of classical Haida literature lived inside Bill's work, much as Greek and Latin literature lives inside the sculpture of the Renaissance. Some Haida readers praised the book. Others were incensed that I had treated Haida literature as literature instead of a privileged body of sacred texts.

In 1999, I published another book, *A Story as Sharp as a Knife*, about the
65 work of Skaay and other Haida poets. Once again, some Haida loved the book, but others were angry and hurt. I had not asked the Council of the Haida Nation

³Raven—the powerful, ever-transforming trickster: ever hungry, ever curious, and ever deceptive but somehow likeable

for permission to translate and publish texts that Swanton bought from Skaay and other speakers a century ago—texts that students of anthropology have been reading in Swanton’s own translations since 1905. I also had not asked if the Council approved my understanding of the texts. I had even been so rude as to compare several works of Haida literature and art to masterworks in other great traditions: to *The Upanishads* and *The Odyssey*, to paintings by Rembrandt and Velázquez, and to musical compositions by Beethoven and Bach.

I discussed these comparisons with Reid in some detail in the years before his death, because he and I enjoyed them. Reid also understood, like every artist, the value of free speech. More than that, he knew that artists, poets, critics and translators must possess not only cultural identity but also cultural distance. Reid, of course, was Haida, but his own relations with the Haida nation were deeply troubled during the finest years of his life. He knew that in order to speak honestly and clearly, an artist or a critic has to stand back far enough to speak from his own heart.

It is a shock to be told that one may not pay homage to artists of the past without permission from their lineal descendants. It is a shock because we know, and the world proves at every turn, that culture is not genetic. And elsewhere in the world, different principles apply. No one needs a licence from the government of Portugal to study Portuguese, nor a licence from the government of Italy to write about the poetry of Dante or to publish new translations of his works. And yet, like the response of the young woman in the classroom, some of the most violent reactions to my book are rooted deep in history and personal emotion. They deserve, at the very least, respect, and possibly some legal accommodation.

It is useful to remember that the stories were not stolen. There is no doubt that Haida leaders alive in 1900 approved of Swanton’s enterprise. Every song and story he recorded was openly and publicly dictated, and every one was paid for. And the stories did not vanish from the land because Swanton wrote them down. They continue to be told. But to know how they were told in 1900, we rely on Swanton’s work—in precisely the same way that we rely on the old photographs to know how Haida villages have changed since 1880.

But as the stories entered Swanton’s notebooks, a momentous change began. The stories started moving, in that instant, from the oral to the literate domain.

In an oral culture, stories are reborn with every telling. They depend for their existence on continuous personal care. This personal relationship—the oral culture’s counterpart to copyright—is limitless (ideally) in time but tightly limited in space. It endures from generation to generation as the story is handed on, but it only extends to the edge of the storyteller’s personal domain.

In the world of printed books, where texts are relatively fixed, their survival rests primarily on freedom: freedom to read, freedom to write, freedom to publish.

Continued

Copyright in the world of printed books is limitless (or tries to be) in space but
110 limited in time. From the moment of publication, a work is legally protected for
a period of years, but when the term expires, the work is released to the public
domain, where freedom of use is nearly absolute.

It is easy to talk about the oral and literate realms as if the line between the
two were marked by a tall barbed-wire fence. In fact, they interpenetrate. Some
115 cultures are wholly oral, but none are wholly literate, and the shift from wholly
oral to partially literate is usually a slow and crabwise shift. Often it comes with
a shift of language, and always it brings political shifts. Cultures of the voice are
largely hereditary cultures. The culture of print is sooner or later democratic.
Fear of the printed book, and attempts to censor free interpretation, were central
120 to the history of Europe for at least three centuries after printing was introduced.
The Haida nation is entering that phase of its own history right now.

If we treat the works of Skaay and his colleagues as the works of individuals,
first published in 1905, then by the rules of print culture, copyright has lapsed.
To do this would ignore important facts of the Haida case. But if we give these
125 stories the perpetual protection they would have in a purely oral world, how do
we define the spatial limits? Should they have perpetual protection inside Haida
Gwaii?⁴ The answer, probably, is yes—but that is for the Haida to decide. And
should they have perpetual protection throughout Canada? That is a question for
Parliament, of course, and the answer is less clear, because the stories Skaay and
130 other Haida poets told to Swanton are not purely Haida stories. The characters
and settings of many are Tsimshian; in others they are Tlingit.⁵ Swanton and his
teacher Franz Boas heard these tales and recorded them time and again, up and
down the coast, in many tongues. And many are stories of the Raven, known to
every storyteller all along the coast, and told in every coastal language.

135 Most Haida stories, like most European paintings, are based on well-known
themes that other peoples share. Yet every story Swanton heard is shaped by an
individual human voice. The stories are international and personal both at the
same time. This is why the rules of the old oral world made such sense:
protection perpetual in time but limited in space.

140 Stories are central to the life of every people. On the other hand, no people
or community or nation, and especially no political authority, can have exclusive
rights to interpret its own history. We know too well what happens when they
try. The 20th century has been shaped by the attempts of Germans, Serbs and
many others to define their past and future for themselves, without regard for the
145 hopes and histories of peoples round about them. The predicament of all the

⁴Haida Gwaii—the original Haida name for the Queen Charlotte Islands which means “Islands of the
People” and which is now widely used as the name for these islands

⁵Tsimshian; in others they are Tlingit—Tsimshian [Shim’shan] and Tlingit [Kling’git] are First Nations
peoples who inhabited the same geographical area as the Haida

North American native nations stems from another such campaign: the long attempt of Europe as a whole to make its history the only one that matters.

150 Literature is in principle uncompliant with authority. It is subversive. That is why it is feared in authoritarian societies. Is it unreasonable to expect an emerging nation, such as that on Haida Gwaii, to accept freedom of speech, freedom of scholarship and freedom of expression while the embryo of its future lies within its hands? Perhaps it is. Yet if those freedoms are not valued and maintained, the future will be bleak.

Robert Bringhurst

Bringhurst, Robert. "Since When Has Culture Been About Genetics?" In *The Globe and Mail*, November 22, 1999, sec. R, p. 3. Reproduced with permission from Robert Bringhurst.

Photograph by Fred Lum. In *The Globe and Mail*, November 22, 1999, sec. R, p. 3. Reprinted with permission from The Globe and Mail.

IV. Questions 20 to 24 in your Questions Booklet are based on this news article. Question 25 requires you to consider this reading together with Reading III. Question 29 requires you to consider this reading together with readings III and V.

After 100 years in a museum vault, New York is returning the bones of 48 Haida, snatched long ago by explorers, to their descendants. Miro Cernetig reports

THE BONES ARE COMING HOME



JON SIMON/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

New York¹

- 5 For years, Andy Wilson camped out on Anthony Island, a Haida hired by his people to protect ancient totem poles and abandoned village sites from grave robbers. Sailing into the bay, at the tip of the dagger-shaped archipelago off Canada's West Coast, you would usually find him on the beach of that ghost village.
- 10 Much of his day was spent gently pulling out weeds from the mortuary totems,² whose delicate cedar had turned silver and felt as soft as a sponge. Occasionally, he would reach down, picking up a human bone among the Pacific seashells.

¹New York—Miro Cernetig reporting from New York for *The Globe and Mail*, September 21, 2002

²mortuary totems—serving as a memorial, the cedar pole carvings identify the person (the person's characteristics, accomplishments, and clan) whose remains are placed in the cedar bent box at the top of the pole

15 “Put him back where he belongs,” he once instructed me on a visit in 1989,
pointing up at a decaying mortuary pole, atop which Haida left their dead to
slowly dissolve back into the rain forest.

20 But Mr. Wilson was always troubled, if not haunted, by a sensation of
something missing. “When I was working down there, I always looked around
and wondered, ‘Where are all our people?’ There were no human remains left, or
at least not very many. But I never knew who to ask about what happened.”

The answer, or at least part of it, came this week, when he and 25 Haida
arrived at Manhattan’s American Museum of Natural History. They retrieved the
bones of 48 Haida from storage vaults on Thursday. They included 11 complete
skeletons, each packed into separate boxes for the past 100 years.

25 By the weekend, all are expected to be back in the Queen Charlotte Islands,
known as Haida Gwaii, where preparations are under way to lay their “wandering
spirits” to rest. The skeletons are to be wrapped in cedar mats and button
blankets. They will then be placed in traditional cedar bent boxes; this time they
will be put underground, in the graveyards at Old Massett and Skidegate.

30 “We’re burying them this time,” advised Mr. Wilson, a cultural historian
who has built more than 300 bentwood boxes for each recovered ancestor. “We
don’t want them being taken away again.”

It closes a macabre chapter on the practice of body snatching in the name of
science. A century ago, it was common for explorers and anthropologists to rob
35 graves from the Arctic to South America, collecting specimens of what they
deemed dying races. In the Queen Charlottes, where smallpox and other diseases
decimated the Haida from a population of 10,000 to 588 by 1915, nobody could
stop them.

40 “People knew it happened,” Mr. Wilson said. “But nobody talked about it. I
think people were afraid of the museums, the governments, the Department of
Indian Affairs. But I don’t think they’re afraid any more.”

That turning point came in the mid-1990s. The Haida had settled their land
claim with Canada, ushering in a period of cultural and political renaissance.
Then, at a meeting about six years go, Mr. Wilson remembers an elder asking
45 about the missing bones. “We decided to find out,” he recalled. “So we started
writing letters to all the museums.”

After years of correspondence, the bones started coming home: Canadian
museums agreed to return pilfered bones. In 1998, a dozen sets of remains were
handed over by Victoria’s Royal British Columbia Museum. The next year, the
50 University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology gave back its six
skeletons. Two years ago, the Museum of Civilization gave up 148 sets of bones.

It was time, the Haida collective decided, to turn their attention beyond
Canada.

55 The American Museum of Natural History, an imposing castle-like building
on Manhattan’s wealthy Upper West Side, was founded in 1869 in the name of

Continued

science. It has long trumpeted its “thousands of expeditions, sending scientists and explorers to every continent since 1887.” It built up a priceless collection of 32 million items, ranging from bone shards to dinosaurs.

Until recently, it has been tone deaf to the pleas of native peoples. But on
60 Thursday, the museum returned the Haida skeletons voluntarily and with little publicity.

Museums still maintain there are scientific reasons to hang onto their collections of old bones; they can offer vital clues about man’s evolution as well as DNA evidence of his migration patterns. But there is a new sensibility.

65 “Times, of course, have changed, there’s a different level of sensitivity and respect toward native people,” said Craig Morris, a respected anthropologist who is also the museum’s dean of science. “One has to look very carefully on a case-by-case basis and try to make the best decisions we can as to what’s more important—the scientific consideration or the . . . interest of the descendants.”

70 This week, the Haida won over the scientific record in New York. But it was not total victory. They had hoped to come back to Canada with 131 more ancestors held at Chicago’s Field Museum. Even though the Haida had raised \$50,000 through charity, to come to the United States, at the last moment, the institution backed down, Mr. Wilson lamented.

75 Sitting on the steps of the New York museum, minutes after wrapping up the last bones and waiting for a visit with Mayor Michael Bloomberg, he said it was his last trip. “I’m going home to go fly-fishing for Coho salmon.”

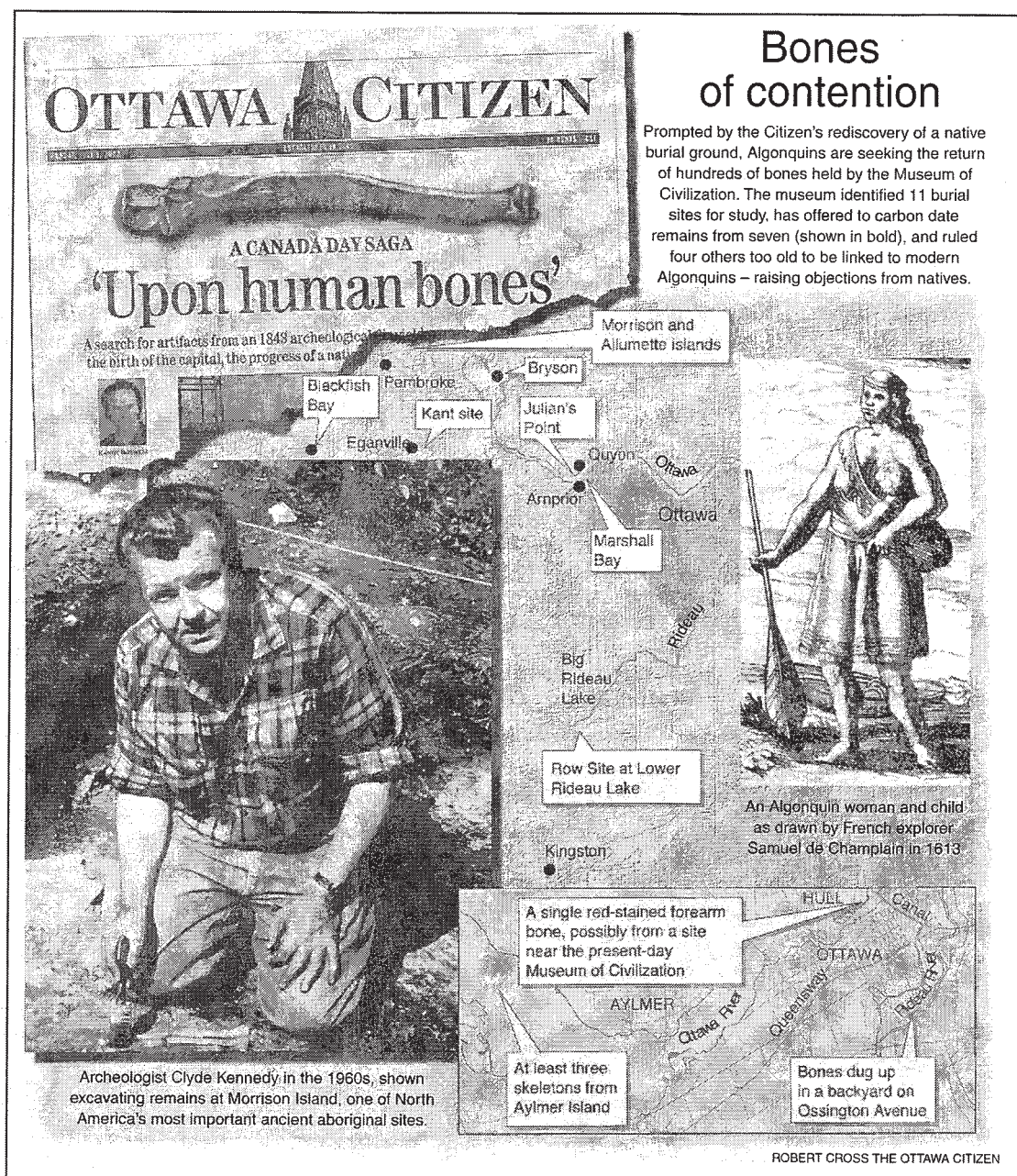
But others are fighting on, their eyes on what may be the most daunting museum vault yet to crack: London’s Royal British Museum, known for its
80 refusal to give anything back, including the famed Elgin marbles³ that the British Empire took from the Greek Parthenon.

“Late one night,” said Lucille Bell, another Haida who travelled to the museum, “I heard children’s voices in the stairway. I thought it was odd that children would be there so late. The guard said I was the only person there. I
85 later learned that a 10-year-old Haida child’s skeleton is a part of the collection. I believe the spirit of this child wanted me to know he was there. To me, I was given a message to take to the Haida community.”

Miro Cernetig

³Elgin marbles—in 1799, Lord Elgin, the then British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, acquired ancient Greek pillars, friezes, and sculptures that he later sold to the British government

- V. Questions 26 to 28 in your Questions Booklet are based on this collage. Question 29 requires you to consider this reading together with readings III and IV.



—from “Museum returns ancient native bones” (*Edmonton Journal*, Dec. 31, 2002)

Collage by Robert Cross, *The Ottawa Citizen*. In the *Edmonton Journal*, December 31, 2002, sec. A, p. 12. Copied under licence from Access Copyright. Further reproduction prohibited unless licenced.

VI. Questions 30 to 38 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a Shakespearean play.

CHARACTERS:

CITIZEN

KING PHILIP—King of France

KING JOHN—King of England

BASTARD—a supporter of King John, Philip Faulconbridge, illegitimate son of the previous King of England, Richard I (the Lionheart, who ruled 1189–99)

AUSTRIA—Duke of Austria, a supporter of King Philip

KING PHILIP of France has assembled his army before the gates of Angiers, a town in France held by England. He hopes to persuade the townspeople to accept Prince Arthur as their king. Prince Arthur is the son of the deceased Geoffrey, a duke of Brittany.

Meanwhile, KING JOHN of England, younger brother to Geoffrey and uncle to Arthur, has brought his army to Angiers to assure the people that he is their rightful king.

from THE LIFE AND DEATH OF KING JOHN, Act II, scene i

(Trumpet sounds. Enter a CITIZEN upon the walls.)

CITIZEN: Who is it that hath warned us to the walls?

KING PHILIP: 'Tis France, for England.

KING JOHN: England for itself.

5 You men of Angiers, and my loving subjects—

KING PHILIP: You loving men of Angiers, Arthur's subjects,

Our trumpet called you to this gentle parle—⁸parle—meeting

KING JOHN: For our advantage; therefore hear us first.

10 These flags of France, that are advanced here
Before the eye and prospect of your town,
Have hither marched to your endamage.

The cannons have their bowels full of wrath,
And ready mounted are they to spit forth
15 Their iron indignation 'gainst your walls.
All preparation for a bloody seige
And merciless proceeding by these French

20 Confront your city's eyes, your winking gates,
 And but for our approach those sleeping stones,
 That as a waist doth girdle you about,
 By the compulsion of their ordinance
 By this time from their fixèd beds of lime
 Had been dishabited, and wide havoc made
 For bloody power to rush upon your peace.
 25 But on the sight of us your lawful king,
 Who painfully with much expedient march
 Have brought a countercheck before your gates,
 To save unscratched your city's threat'ned cheeks,
 Behold, the French amazed vouchsafe a parole;
 30 And now, instead of bullets wrapped in fire,
 To make a shaking fever in your walls,
 They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke,
 To make a faithless error in your ears.
 Which trust accordingly, kind citizens,
 35 And let us in, your king, whose labored spirits,
 Forwearied in this action of swift speed,
 Craves harborage within your city walls.
KING PHILIP: When I have said, make answer to us both.
 40 Lo! In this right hand, whose protection
 Is most divinely vowed upon the right
 Of him it holds, stands young Plantagenet,
 Son to the elder brother of this man,
 And king o'er him and all that he enjoys.
 For this downtrodden equity we tread
 45 In warlike march these greens before your town,
 Being no further enemy to you
 Than the constraint of hospitable zeal,
 In the relief of this oppressed child,
 Religiously provokes. Be pleasèd then
 50 To pay that duty which you truly owe
 To him that owes it, namely this young prince;
 And then our arms, like to a muzzled bear,
 Save in aspect, hath all offense sealed up.
 Our cannons' malice vainly shall be spent
 55 Against th' invulnerable clouds of heaven,
 And with a blessèd and unvexed retire,
 With unhacked swords and helmets all unbruised,

¹⁸winking—closed

²⁰waist—belt

³⁹In this right hand—
indicated by my right
hand

⁴¹Plantagenet—Arthur,
of the royal
Plantagenet family

⁵¹owes—deserves

Continued

We will bear home that lusty blood again
 Which here we came to spout against your town,
 60 And leave your children, wives, and you, in peace.
 But if you fondly pass our proffered offer,
 'Tis not the roundure of your old-faced walls
 Can hide you from our messengers of war.
 Though all these English and their discipline
 65 Were harbored in their rude circumference. ⁶⁵rude—rough
 Then tell us, shall your city call us lord,
 In that behalf which we have challenged it?
 Or shall we give the signal to our rage
 And stalk in blood to our possession?
 70 **CITIZEN:** In brief, we are the King of England's subjects.
 For him, and in his right, we hold this town.
KING JOHN: Acknowledge then the king, and let me in.
CITIZEN: That can we not; but he that proves the king,
 To him will we prove loyal. Till that time
 75 Have we rammed up our gates against the world.
KING JOHN: Doth not the crown of England prove
 the king?
 And if not that, I bring you witnesses,
 Twice fifteen thousand hearts of England's breed—
 80 **BASTARD:** Bastards, and else.
KING JOHN: To verify our title with their lives.
KING PHILIP: As many and as well-born bloods as those—
BASTARD: Some bastards, too.
KING PHILIP: Stand in his face to contradict his claim.
 85 **CITIZEN:** Till you compound whose right is worthiest,
 We for the worthiest hold the right from both.
KING JOHN: Then God forgive the sins of all those souls
 That to their everlasting residence,
 Before the dew of evening fall, shall fleet,
 90 In dreadful trial of our kingdom's king!
KING PHILIP: Amen, amen! Mount, chevaliers! To arms!
BASTARD: Saint George, that swinged the dragon, and
 e'er since
 Sits on's horseback at mine hostess' door,
 95 Teach us some fence! (*to AUSTRIA*) Sirrah, were
 I at home

⁹²Saint George—patron saint of England. The slaying of a dragon is one of the legendary feats attributed to him
⁹²swinged—slayed
⁹⁵fence—skills using a sword

At your den, sirrah, with your lioness,
 I would set an ox head to your lion's hide,
 And make a monster of you.

100 **AUSTRIA:** Peace! No more.
BASTARD: O tremble, for you hear the lion roar.
KING JOHN: Up higher to the plain, where we'll set forth
 In best appointment all our regiments.
BASTARD: Speed then, to take advantage of the field.

105 **KING PHILIP:** It shall be so; and at the other hill
 Command the rest to stand. God, and our right!
 (Exeunt.)

⁹⁷lioness—slang
 expression for a
 prostitute
⁹⁸set an ox head . . .
 monster of you—an
 insulting joke

William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

Shakespeare, William. *The Life and Death of King John*. In *William Shakespeare the Complete Works*, edited by Alfred Harbage.
 New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1969.

VII. Questions 39 to 48 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a novel.

The story is set in India in the mid-1970s. Maneck Kohlah, a young man from the countryside near the Himalayas, has said goodbye to his parents and travelled by autorickshaw to meet the train that will take him into the city to begin university.

from A FINE BALANCE

Maneck found his compartment and paid the coolie after the luggage was stowed away. The bungalow on wheels from his childhood had shrunk. Time had turned the magical to mundane. The whistle sounded. No time to buy the maize.¹ He sank into the seat beside his fellow passenger.

- 5 The man did not encourage Maneck's efforts at conversation, answering with nods and grunts, or vague hand movements. He was neatly dressed, his hair parted on the left. His shirt pocket bristled with pens and markers in a special clip-on plastic case. The two seats facing them were occupied by a young woman and her father. She was busy knitting. By the fragment hanging from the needles,
10 Maneck tried to decipher what it might be – scarf, pullover sleeve, sock?

The father rose to go to the lavatory. "Wait, Papaji, I'll help you," said the daughter, as he limped into the aisle on one crutch. Good, thought Maneck, she would have to take the upper berth. The view would be better, from his own upper berth.

- 15 In the evening, Maneck offered his neatly dressed neighbour a Gluco biscuit. He whispered thank you. "You're welcome," Maneck whispered back, assuming the man had a preference for speaking softly. In return for the biscuit he received a banana. Its skin was blackened in the heat, but he ate it all the same.

- 20 The attendant began making the rounds with blankets and sheets, readying the berths for sleep. After he left, the neatly dressed man took a chain and padlock from the bag that held his bananas and shackled his trunk to a bracket under the seat. Leaning towards Maneck's ear, he explained confidentially, "Because of thieves – they enter the compartments when passengers fall asleep."

- "Oh," said Maneck, a little perturbed. No one had warned him about this.
25 But maybe the chap was just a nervous type. "You know, some years ago my mother and I took this same train, and nothing was stolen."

- "Sadly, now the world is much changed." The man took off his shirt and hung it neatly on a hook by the window. Then he removed the plastic case from the pocket and clipped it to his vest, careful not to snare his chest hair in the
30 formidable spring. Seeing Maneck watching, he whispered with a smile, "I am very fond of my pens. I don't like separating from them, not even in sleep."

Maneck smiled back, whispering, "Yes, I also have a favourite pen. I don't lend it to anyone – it spoils the angle of the nib."

¹maize—corn

35 The father and daughter did not take kindly to these whispers which excluded them. “What can we do, Papaji, some people are just born rude,” she said, handing him his crutch. They went off again to the bathroom, hurling a frosty glance at the opposite seats.

It went unnoticed, for Maneck had begun to worry about his suitcase. The pen-lover’s soft words about thieves ruined his night, and he forgot all about the woman in the upper berth. By the time he remembered, she was under cover from prying eyes, Papaji having tucked in the sheet around her neck.

Before climbing into his own berth, Maneck positioned his suitcase so that one corner would be visible from above. He lay awake, peering at it every now and then. The young woman’s father caught him looking a few times, and eyed him suspiciously. Towards dawn, slumber overpowered Maneck’s vigilance. The last thing he saw while surrendering to sleep was Papaji balanced on one crutch, curtaining off his daughter with a bedsheet as she descended without exposing so much as a calf or an ankle.

He did not awake till the attendant came to collect the bedclothes. The young woman was already busy with her knitting, the inscrutable woollen segment dancing below her fingers. Tea was served. Now the neatly dressed pen-lover was more talkative. The cluster of pens was back in his shirt pocket. Maneck learned that yesterday’s reticence had been due to a throat ailment.

“Thankfully, it has eased a little this morning,” said the man, as he coughed and threatened to hawk.²

Remembering how he had returned the man’s hoarse whispers by whispering back dramatically, Maneck felt a little embarrassed. He wondered if he should apologize or explain, but the pen-lover did not appear to bear any resentment.

“It’s a very serious condition,” he explained. “And I am travelling to seek specialist treatment.” He cleared his throat again. “I could never have imagined, long, long ago, when I started my career, that this was what it would do to me. But how can you fight your destiny?”

Maneck shook his head in sympathy. “Was it a factory job? Toxic fumes?”

The man laughed scornfully at the suggestion. “I’m an LL.B., a fully qualified lawyer.”

“Oh, I see. So the lengthy speeches in dusty courtrooms strained and ruined your vocal cords.”

“Not at all – quite the contrary.” He hesitated, “It’s such a long story.”

“But we have lots of time,” encouraged Maneck. “It’s such a long journey.”

70 Papaji and daughter had had enough of them exchanging comments in low voices. Papaji was certain that their soft laughter contained a leering note, aimed directly at his innocent daughter. He scowled, picked up his crutch, took his daughter by the hand and stomped one-leggedly down the aisle. “What to do, Papaji,” she said. “Some people just have no manners.”

Continued

²hawk—a noisy clearing of the throat resulting in the need to spit

75 “I wonder what’s wrong with those two,” said the pen-lover, watching the precise, machinelike movement of the crutch. He uncorked a small green bottle, sipped, and put it aside. Fingering his pens affectionately, he tried out the freshly medicated larynx with the opening sentence of the story of his throat.

80 “My law career, which was my first, my best-loved career, started a very long time ago. In the year of our independence.”

Maneck counted rapidly. “From 1947 to 1975 – twenty-eight years. That’s a lot of legal experience.”

85 “Not really. Within two years I changed careers. I couldn’t stand it, performing before a courtroom audience day after day. Too much stress for a shy person like me. I would lie in bed at night, sweating and shivering, scared of the next morning. I needed a job where I would be left to myself. Where I could work *in camera*.”

“Photography?”

90 “No, that’s Latin, it means in private.” He scratched his pens as though relieving an itch for them, and looked rueful. “It’s a bad habit I have, because of my law training – using these silly phrases instead of good English words. Anyway, seeking privacy, I became a proofreader for *The Times of India*.”

How would proofreading ravage the throat? wondered Maneck. But he had already interrupted twice and made a fool of himself. Better to keep quiet and

95 listen.

“I was the best they had, the absolute best. The most difficult and important things were saved for my inspection. The editorial page, court proceedings, legal texts, stockmarket figures. Politicians’ speeches, too – so boring they could make you drowsy, send you to sleep. And drowsiness is the one great enemy of the

100 proofreader. I have seen it destroy several promising reputations.

“But nothing was too tricky for me. The letters sailed before my eyes, line after line, orderly fleets upon an ocean of newsprint. Sometimes I felt like a Lord High Admiral, in supreme command of the printer’s navy. And within months I was promoted to Chief Proofreader.

105 “My night sweats disappeared, I slept well. For twenty-four years I held the position. I was happy in my little cubicle – my kingdom with my desk, my chair, and my reading light. What more could anyone want?”

“Nothing,” said Maneck.

“Exactly. But kingdoms don’t last for ever – not even modest little cubicle

110 kingdoms. One day it happened, without warning.”

“What?”

“Disaster. I was checking an editorial about a State Assembly member who made a personal fortune out of the Drought Relief Project. My eyes began to itch and water. Thinking nothing of it, I rubbed them, wiped them dry, and resumed

115 my work. Within seconds they were wet again. I dried them once more. But it kept on happening, on and on. And it was no longer a tear or two which could be ignored, but a continuous stream.

“Soon, my concerned colleagues were gathered around me. They crowded my little cubicle, pouring comfort upon what they thought was grief. They
120 presumed that reading about the sorry state of the nation, day after day – about the corruption, the natural calamities, the economic crises – had finally broken me. That I was dissolving in a fit of sorrow and despair.

“They were wrong, of course. I would never let emotions stand in the way of my professional duties. Mind you, I’m not saying a proofreader must be heartless.
125 I’m not denying that I often felt like weeping at what I read – stories of misery, caste violence, government callousness, official arrogance, police brutality. I’m certain many of us felt that way, and an emotional outburst would be quite normal. But too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart, as my favourite poet has written.”

130 “Who’s that?”

“W.B. Yeats. And I think that sometimes normal behaviour has to be suppressed, in order to carry on.”

“I’m not sure,” said Maneck. “Wouldn’t it be better to respond honestly instead of hiding it? Maybe if everyone in the country was angry or upset, it
135 might change things, force the politicians to behave properly.”

The man’s eyes lit up at the challenge, relishing the opportunity to argue. “In theory, yes, I would agree with you. But in practice, it might lead to the onset of more major disasters. Just try to imagine six hundred million raging, howling, sobbing humans. Everyone in the country – including airline pilots, engine
140 drivers, bus and tram conductors – all losing control of themselves. What a catastrophe. Aeroplanes falling from the skies, trains going off the tracks, boats sinking, buses and lorries and cars crashing. Chaos. Complete chaos.”

He paused to give Maneck’s imagination time to fill in the details of the anarchy he had unleashed. “And please also remember: scientists haven’t done any
145 research on the effects of mass hysteria and mass suicide upon the environment. Not on this subcontinental scale. If a butterfly’s wings can create atmospheric disturbances halfway round the world, who knows what might happen in our case. Storms? Cyclones? Tidal waves? What about the land mass, would it quake in empathy? Would the mountains explode? What about rivers, would the tears
150 from twelve hundred million eyes cause them to rise and flood?”

He took another sip from the green bottle. “No, it’s too dangerous. Better to carry on in the usual way.” He corked the bottle and wiped his lips. “To get back to the facts. There I was with the day’s proofs before me, and my eyes leaking copiously. Not one word was readable. The text, the disciplined rows and
155 columns, were suddenly in mutiny, the letters pitching and tossing, disintegrating in a sea of stormy paper.”

He passed his hand across his eyes, reliving that fateful day, then stroked his pens comfortingly, as though they too might be upset by the evocation of those

Continued

160 painful events. Maneck took the opportunity to slip in a bit of praise, to ensure
 that the story continued. “You know, you’re the first proofreader I’ve met. I
 would have guessed they’d be very dull people, but you speak so . . . with
 such . . . so differently. Almost like a poet.”

165 “And why shouldn’t I? For twenty-four years, the triumphs and tragedies of
 our country quickened my breath, making my pulse sing with joy or quiver with
 sorrow. In twenty-four years of proofreading, flocks of words flew into my head
 through the windows of my soul. Some of them stayed on and built nests in there.
 Why should I not speak like a poet, with a commonwealth of language at my
 disposal, constantly invigorated by new arrivals?” He gave a mighty sigh. “Until
 170 that wet day, of course, when it was all over. When the windows were slammed
 shut. And the ophthalmologist sentenced me to impotence, saying that my
 proofreading days were behind me.”

“Couldn’t he give you new spectacles or something?”

“That wouldn’t have helped. The trouble was, my eyes had become
 virulently allergic to printing ink.” He spread his hands in a gesture of emptiness.
 175 “The nectar that nurtured me had turned to poison.”

“Then what did you do?”

“What can anyone do in such circumstances? Accept it, and go on. Please
 always remember, the secret of survival is to embrace change, and to adapt. To
 quote: ‘All things fall and are built again, and those that build them again are
 180 gay.’”

“Yeats?” guessed Maneck.

The proofreader nodded, “You see, you cannot draw lines and compartments,
 and refuse to budge beyond them. Sometimes you have to use your failures as
 stepping-stones to success. You have to maintain a fine balance between hope
 185 and despair.” He paused, considering what he had just said. “Yes,” he repeated.
 “In the end, it’s all a question of balance.”

Rohinton Mistry

VIII. Questions 49 to 62 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a play.

CHARACTERS:

LADY

NAPOLEON—Napoleon Bonaparte, general of the French army

SETTING: an Italian inn, early in the 19th century

During his conquest of Italy, NAPOLEON confronts a woman at an inn where they are both staying. He suspects the LADY of being a spy who has stolen some letters and dispatches from one of his lieutenants.

from THE MAN OF DESTINY

LADY. How can I thank you, General, for your protection?

NAPOLEON [*turning on her suddenly*] My despatches: come!

[*He puts out his hand for them*].

5 LADY. General! [*She involuntarily puts her hand on her fichu¹ as if to protect something there*].

NAPOLEON. You tricked that blockhead out of them. You disguised yourself as a man. I want my despatches. They are there in the bosom of your dress, under your hands.

10 LADY [*quickly removing her hands*] Oh, how unkindly you are speaking to me! [*She takes her handkerchief from her fichu*] You frighten me. [*She touches her eyes as if to wipe away a tear*].

NAPOLEON. I see you don't know me, madam, or you would save yourself the trouble of pretending to cry.

15 LADY [*producing an effect of smiling through her tears*] Yes, I do know you. You are the famous General Buonaparte. [*She gives the name a marked Italian pronunciation; Bwawna-parr-te*].

NAPOLEON [*angrily, with the French pronunciation*] Bonaparte, madam, Bonaparte. The papers, if you please.

20 LADY. But I assure you – [*He snatches the handkerchief rudely*] General! [*indignantly*].

Continued

¹*fichu*—a woman's triangular scarf made from a light fabric; the scarf was often worn over the shoulders and crossed or tied in a loose knot

- NAPOLEON [*taking the other handkerchief from his breast*] You lent one of your handkerchiefs to my lieutenant when you robbed him. [*He looks at the two handkerchiefs*]. They match one another. [*He smells them*]. The same scent. [*He flings them down on the table*]. I am waiting for my despatches. I shall
- 25 take them, if necessary, with as little ceremony as I took the handkerchief.
- LADY [*in dignified reproof*] General: do you threaten women?
- NAPOLEON [*bluntly*] Yes.
- LADY [*disconcerted, trying to gain time*] But I don't understand. I –
- NAPOLEON. You understand perfectly. You came here because your Austrian
- 30 employers calculated that I was six leagues² away. I am always to be found where my enemies don't expect me. You have walked into the lion's den. Come! you are a brave woman. Be a sensible one: I have no time to waste. The papers. [*He advances a step ominously*].
- LADY [*breaking down in the childish rage of impotence, and throwing herself in*
- 35 *tears on the chair left beside the table by the lieutenant*] I brave! How little you know! I have spent the day in an agony of fear. I have a pain here from the tightening of my heart at every suspicious look, every threatening movement. Do you think everyone is as brave as you? Oh, why will not you brave people do the brave things? Why do you leave them to us, who have
- 40 no courage at all? I'm not brave: I shrink from violence: danger makes me miserable.
- NAPOLEON [*interested*] Then why have you thrust yourself into danger?
- LADY. Because there is no other way: I can trust nobody else. And now it is all useless: all because of you, who have no fear because you have no heart, no
- 45 feeling, no – [*She breaks off, and throws herself on her knees*]. Ah, General, let me go: let me go without asking any questions. You shall have your despatches and letters: I swear it.
- NAPOLEON [*holding out his hand*] Yes: I am waiting for them.
- She gasps, daunted by his ruthless promptitude³ into despair of moving*
- 50 *him by cajolery. She looks up perplexedly at him, racking her brains for some device to outwit him. He meets her regard inflexibly.*
- LADY [*rising at last with a quiet little sigh*]: I will get them for you. They are in my room. [*She turns to the door*].
- NAPOLEON. I shall accompany you, madam.
- 55 LADY [*drawing herself up with a noble air of offended delicacy*] I cannot permit you, General, to enter my chamber.

²leagues—units of measure between 3.86 km and 7.40 km

³promptitude—performed without delay

- NAPOLEON. Then you shall stay here, madam, whilst I have your chamber searched for my papers.
- 60 LADY [*spitefully, openly giving up her plan*] You may save yourself the trouble. They are not there.
- NAPOLEON. No: I have already told you where they are [*pointing to her breast*].
- LADY [*with pretty piteousness*] General: I only want to keep one little private letter. Only one. Let me have it.
- NAPOLEON [*cold and stern*] Is that a reasonable demand, madam?
- 65 LADY [*encouraged by his not refusing point-blank*] No: but that is why you must grant it. Are your own demands reasonable? thousands of lives for the sake of your victories, your ambitions, your destiny! And what I ask is such a little thing. And I am only a weak woman, and you a brave man. [*She looks at him with her eyes full of tender pleading, and is about to kneel to him again*].
- 70 LADY [*encouraged by his not refusing point-blank*] No: but that is why you must grant it. Are your own demands reasonable? thousands of lives for the sake of your victories, your ambitions, your destiny! And what I ask is such a little thing. And I am only a weak woman, and you a brave man. [*She looks at him with her eyes full of tender pleading, and is about to kneel to him again*].
- 75 LADY [*encouraged by his not refusing point-blank*] No: but that is why you must grant it. Are your own demands reasonable? thousands of lives for the sake of your victories, your ambitions, your destiny! And what I ask is such a little thing. And I am only a weak woman, and you a brave man. [*She looks at him with her eyes full of tender pleading, and is about to kneel to him again*].
- NAPOLEON [*brusquely*] Get up, get up. [*He turns moodily away and takes a turn across the room, pausing for a moment to say, over his shoulder*] You're talking nonsense; and you know it. [*She sits down submissively on the couch. When he turns and sees her despair, he feels that his victory is complete, and that he may now indulge in a little play with his victim. He comes back and sits beside her. She looks alarmed and moves a little away from him; but a ray of rallying hope beams from her eye. He begins like a man enjoying some secret joke*]. How do you know I am a brave man?
- LADY [*amazed*] You! General Buonaparte [*Italian pronunciation*].
- 80 LADY [*amazed*] You! General Buonaparte [*Italian pronunciation*].
- LADY. Oh, how can you ask such a question? you! who stood only two days ago at the bridge at Lodi, with the air full of death, fighting a duel with cannons across the river! [*Shuddering*]. Oh, you do brave things.
- NAPOLEON. So do you.
- 85 LADY. I! [*With a sudden odd thought*] Oh! Are you a coward?
- NAPOLEON [*laughing grimly and slapping his knees*] That is the one question you must never ask a soldier. The sergeant asks after the recruit's height, his age, his wind, his limb, but never after his courage.
- LADY [*as if she had found it no laughing matter*] Ah, you can laugh at fear.
- 90 LADY [*as if she had found it no laughing matter*] Ah, you can laugh at fear. Then you don't know what fear is.
- NAPOLEON. Tell me this. Suppose you could have got that letter by coming to me over the bridge at Lodi the day before yesterday! Suppose there had been no other way, and that this was a sure way – if only you escaped the cannon! [*She shudders and covers her eyes for a moment with her hands*].
- 95 LADY [*as if she had found it no laughing matter*] Ah, you can laugh at fear. Then you don't know what fear is.

Continued

LADY. Oh, horribly afraid, agonizingly afraid. [*She presses her hand on her heart*]. It hurts only to imagine it.

NAPOLEON [*inflexibly*] Would you have come for the despatches?

LADY [*overcome by the imagined horror*] Don't ask me. I must have come.

100 NAPOLEON. Why?

LADY. Because I must. Because there would have been no other way.

NAPOLEON [*with conviction*] Because you would have wanted my letter enough to bear your fear. [*He rises suddenly, and deliberately poses for an oration*]. There is only one universal passion: fear. Of all the thousand qualities a

105 man may have, the only one you will find as certainly in the youngest drummer boy in my army as in me, is fear. It is fear that makes men fight: it is indifference that makes them run away: fear is the mainspring of war. Fear! I know fear well, better than you, better than any woman. I once saw a regiment of good Swiss soldiers massacred by a mob in Paris because I was

110 afraid to interfere: I felt myself a coward to the tips of my toes as I looked on at it. Seven months ago I revenged my shame by pounding that mob to death with cannon balls. Well, what of that? Has fear ever held a man back from anything he really wanted – or a woman either? Never. Come with me; and I will shew you twenty thousand cowards who will risk death every

115 day for the price of a glass of brandy. And do you think there are no women in the army, braver than the men, though their lives are worth more? Psha! I think nothing of your fear or your bravery. If you had had to come across to me at Lodi, you would not have been afraid: once on the bridge, every other feeling would have gone down before the necessity – the necessity – for

120 making your way to my side and getting what you wanted.

And now, suppose you had done all this! suppose you had come safely out with that letter in your hand, knowing that when the hour came, your fear had tightened, not your heart, but your grip of your own purpose! that it had ceased to be fear, and had become strength, penetration, vigilance, iron

125 resolution! how would you answer then if you were asked whether you were a coward?

LADY [*rising*] Ah, you are a hero, a real hero.

NAPOLEON. Pooh! there's no such thing as a real hero. [*He strolls about the room, making light of her enthusiasm, but by no means displeased with himself for having evoked it*].

130 LADY. Ah yes, there is. There is a difference between what you call my bravery and yours. You wanted to win the battle of Lodi for yourself and not for anyone else, didn't you?

NAPOLEON. Of course. [*Suddenly recollecting himself*] Stop: no. [*He pulls himself piously together, and says, like a man conducting a religious service*]

135 I am only the servant of the French republic, following humbly in the

footsteps of the heroes of classical antiquity. I win battles for humanity: for my country, not for myself.

140 LADY [*disappointed*] Oh, then you are only a womanish hero after all. [*She sits down again, all her enthusiasm gone*].

NAPOLEON [*greatly astonished*] Womanish!

145 LADY [*listlessly*] Yes, like me. [*With deep melancholy*] Do you think that if I wanted those despatches only for myself, I dare venture into a battle for them? No: if that were all, I should not have the courage to ask to see you at your hotel, even. My courage is mere slavishness: it is of no use to me for my own purposes. It is only through love, through pity, through the instinct to save and protect someone else, that I can do the things that terrify me.

NAPOLEON [*contemptuously*] Pshaw [*He turns slightly away from her*].

150 LADY. Aha! now you see that I'm not really brave. [*Relapsing into petulant listlessness*] But what right have you to despise me if you only win your battles for others? for your country! through patriotism! That is what I call womanish: it is so like a Frenchman!

NAPOLEON [*furiously*] I am no Frenchman.

155 LADY [*innocently*] I thought you said you won the battle of Lodi for your country, General Bu – shall I pronounce it in Italian or French?

NAPOLEON. You are presuming on my patience, madam. I was born a French subject, but not in France.⁴

LADY [*affecting a marked access⁵ of interest in him*] You were not born a subject at all, I think.

160 NAPOLEON [*greatly pleased*] Eh? Eh? You think not.

LADY. I am sure of it.

165 NAPOLEON. Well, well, perhaps not. [*The self-complacency of his assent catches his own ear. He stops short, reddening. Then, composing himself into a solemn attitude, modelled on the heroes of classical antiquity, he takes a high moral tone*]. But we must not live for ourselves alone, little one. Never forget that we should always think of others, and work for others, and lead and govern them for their own good. Self-sacrifice is the foundation of all true nobility of character.

170 LADY [*again relaxing her attitude with a sigh*] Ah, it is easy to see that you have never tried it, General.

George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950)

⁴not in France—Napoleon was born in Corsica, which has been ruled by France since 1768

⁵access—increase

IX. Questions 63 to 70 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

ONLY CHILD

The early conflict made him pale
and when he woke from those long weeping slumbers she was
there

- and the air about them—hers and his—
5 sometimes a comfort to him, like a quilt, but more
often than not a fear.

- There were times he went away—he knew not where—
over the fields or scuffling to the shore;
suffered her eagerness on his return
10 for news of him—where had he been, what done?
He hardly knew, nor did he wish to know
or think about it vocally or share
his private world with her.

- Then they would plan another walk, a long
15 adventure in the country, for her sake—
in search of birds. Perhaps they'd find the blue
heron today, for sure the kittiwake.

- Birds were familiar to him now, he knew
them by their feathers and a shyness like his own
20 soft in the silence.
Of the ducks she said, 'Observe,
the canvas-back's a diver,' and her words
stuccoed the slaty water of the lake.

- He had no wish to separate them in groups
25 or learn the latin,
or, waking early to their song remark, 'The thrush,'
or say at evening when the air is streaked
with certain swerving flying,
'Ah, the swifts.'

- 30 Birds were his element like air and not
her words for them—making them statues
setting them apart,
nor were they facts and details like a book.

When she said, 'Look!'
 35 he let his eyeballs harden
 and when two came and nested in the garden
 he felt their softness, gentle, near his heart.

She gave him pictures which he avoided, showing
 strange species flat against a foreign land.
 40 Rather would he lie in the grass, the deep grass of the island
 close to the gulls' nests knowing
 these things he loved and needed near his hand,
 untouched and hardly seen but deeply understood.
 Or sail among them through a wet wind feeling
 45 their wings within his blood.

Like every mother's boy he loved and hated
 smudging the future photograph she had,
 yet struggled within the frames of her eyes and then
 froze for her, the noted naturalist—
 50 her very affectionate and famous son.
 But when most surely in her grasp, his smile
 darting and enfolding her, his words:
 'Without my mother's help . . .' the dream occurred.

Dozens of flying things surrounded him
 55 on a green terrace in the sun
 and one by one
 as if he held caresses in his palm
 he caught them all and snapped and wrung their necks
 brittle as little sticks.
 60 Then through the bald, unfeathered air
 and coldly as a man would walk
 against a metal backdrop, he
 bore down on her
 and placed them in her wide maternal lap
 65 and accurately said their names aloud:
 woodpecker, sparrow, meadowlark, nuthatch.

P. K. Page (1916–)

Page, P. K. "Only Child." In *The Glass Air: Selected Poems*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1985. Copied under licence from Access Copyright. Further reproduction prohibited unless licenced.

I. Read the poem on page 1 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 1 to 5.

1. The image of “his glistening back / In the bath” (lines 2 to 3) reveals the
 - A. depth of the mother’s emotion
 - B. son’s innocent view of the world
 - C. son’s contentment during childhood
 - D. vividness of the mother’s recollections

2. In the context of lines 9 to 12, the words “Once” (line 9) and “forever now” (line 11) emphasize the
 - A. transition in the mother’s role
 - B. son’s determination to become self-reliant
 - C. impracticality of the son’s decision to marry
 - D. mother’s preoccupation with her own interests

3. The mother’s glimpses of events in her son’s childhood serve to suggest the
 - A. fleeting nature of time
 - B. difficulty of overcoming adversity
 - C. randomness of people’s experiences
 - D. inevitable consequences of people’s actions

4. The poet’s approach to the subject of the poem reflects
 - A. an attitude of indifference to social conventions
 - B. the contrived nature of personal relationships
 - C. an empathetic view of a bittersweet moment
 - D. the traditional aspects of a significant event

5. The image of the mother at her son’s wedding ceremony is **mainly** one of
 - A. pride
 - B. unease
 - C. isolation
 - D. independence

II. Read the commentary on page 2 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 6 to 11.

6. In lines 2 to 5, the writer presents the idea that “a clearer sense of what is unique” (line 5) about Seamus Heaney’s poetry might be gained through
- A. a critical analysis of literary technique
 - B. an extensive study of Heaney’s poems
 - C. an understanding of Heaney’s personality
 - D. a comparison with the work of other poets
7. In lines 13 to 17, the writer suggests that “Mother of the Groom” is a “perfect” poem because of the poet’s
- A. imaginative creativity and idealistic approach
 - B. succinct expression and sensitive insight
 - C. melodramatic style and vivid imagery
 - D. complex structure and sombre tone
8. In line 19, the phrase “without any prosing around” refers to Seamus Heaney’s
- A. subtle wit
 - B. formal tone
 - C. brevity of expression
 - D. complexity of thought
9. In the context of the commentary, “the never-healed loss that this poem is about” (line 24) involves the mother’s
- A. refusal to relinquish her own independence
 - B. struggle to come to terms with her own experience
 - C. preoccupation with maintaining close ties with her family
 - D. denial of responsibility for events that are beyond her control

10. In line 31, the writer explains that “What makes the poem magical” is that it
- A. immortalizes motherhood
 - B. incorporates imagery
 - C. invites introspection
 - D. illustrates reality
11. The word from the commentary that **best** reflects the mother’s response to her son’s wedding in “Mother of the Groom” is
- A. “trite” (line 26)
 - B. “solemn” (line 29)
 - C. “unforgettable” (line 30)
 - D. “magical” (line 31)

III. Read the essay on pages 3 to 7 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 12 to 19.

12. Lines 1 to 6 serve to
- A. narrow the scope of the essay topic
 - B. ignite controversy with sensationalism
 - C. clarify the headline and provide context
 - D. retract past editorial comments on the issue
13. Swanton recorded Skaay's stories "in phonetic script" (line 13) in order to
- A. transcribe the stories as they were pronounced
 - B. interpret the stories to produce his own version
 - C. integrate the stories into existing English stories
 - D. hide the stories in an attempt to maintain their secrecy
14. Bringhurst's revelation in lines 37 to 38 is **most strongly** supported by the statement
- A. "The woman in the classroom did not herself speak Haida but had heard it and recognized the sounds" (lines 39–40)
 - B. "No problem whatsoever if it had been Greek or Latin, but it wasn't; it was Haida: her precious lost possession" (lines 45–46)
 - C. "The knowledge that I spoke the language poorly would not have made it possible for her to speak it well" (lines 51–52)
 - D. "what little I knew would not have made her own tasks any easier" (lines 53–54)
15. The statement that artists "must possess not only cultural identity but also cultural distance" (line 78) is an example of
- A. an exaggeration
 - B. apostrophe
 - C. a paradox
 - D. sarcasm

16. The writer contrasts “the storyteller’s personal domain” (line 106) with the work “released to the public domain” (lines 111 to 112) to argue that the
- A. changing nature of the oral tradition threatens a print culture’s freedom
 - B. right of an author to his text is greater than a publisher’s right to publish
 - C. print culture ensures that oral texts, which have survived through continuity, do not disappear
 - D. haphazard nature of the administration of international copyright laws is causing the problem
17. Support for Bringhurst’s claim that “we know, and the world proves at every turn, that culture is not genetic” (lines 84 to 85) is **most directly** evident in the statement
- A. “But as the stories entered Swanton’s notebooks, a momentous change began” (line 100)
 - B. “Cultures of the voice are largely hereditary cultures” (lines 117–118)
 - C. “The culture of print is sooner or later democratic” (line 118)
 - D. “Most Haida stories, like most European paintings, are based on well-known themes that other peoples share” (lines 135–136)
18. According to Bringhurst, “The predicament of all the North American native nations” (lines 145 to 146) is the result of
- A. the displacement of aboriginal cultures by European cultures
 - B. the Haida’s refusal to accept the principle of individual freedom
 - C. traditional aboriginal societies having no written records of their history
 - D. traditional values, myths, and beliefs merging with those of many other cultures

Continued

19. The controlling idea of this essay is expressed in the quotation
- A. “The stories are international and personal both at the same time. This is why the rules of the old oral world made such sense: protection perpetual in time but limited in space” (lines 137–139)
 - B. “Stories are central to the life of every people. On the other hand, no people or community or nation, and especially no political authority, can have exclusive rights to interpret its own history” (lines 140–142)
 - C. “The predicament of all the North American native nations stems from another such campaign: the long attempt of Europe as a whole to make its history the only one that matters” (lines 145–147)
 - D. “Is it unreasonable to expect an emerging nation, such as that on Haida Gwaii, to accept freedom of speech, freedom of scholarship and freedom of expression while the embryo of its future lies within its hands?” (lines 149–152)

IV. Read the news article on pages 8 to 10 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 20 to 24.

- 20.** The phrase “delicate cedar had turned silver and felt as soft as a sponge” (line 11) suggests
- A.** the gentle grace of aging totems
 - B.** vandals have defaced the totems
 - C.** pollution is destroying the totems
 - D.** the ongoing preservation of the totems
- 21.** Andy Wilson’s statements such as “Put him back where he belongs” (line 14), “We’re burying them this time” (line 30), and “I don’t think they’re afraid anymore” (line 41) suggest that the Haida are
- A.** inventing their past
 - B.** determined to right a wrong
 - C.** reluctantly accepting the situation
 - D.** fiercely defending their independence
- 22.** For the Haida, the “period of cultural and political renaissance” (line 43) resulted in
- A.** a renewed sense of identity
 - B.** new ways to share leadership
 - C.** a return to traditional gender roles
 - D.** new incentives for scientific exploration
- 23.** In line 64, the “new sensibility” that the writer refers to is the gradual acceptance of the
- A.** support for the right of minorities to independence
 - B.** necessity for international litigation by cultural historians
 - C.** indigenous peoples as the rightful custodians of their heritage
 - D.** scientific community as the moral authority in property disputes
- 24.** Reference to “the famed Elgin marbles” (line 80) reinforces how
- A.** minority groups have no hope of recovering their property
 - B.** even heightened sensitivity does not ensure significant change
 - C.** scientific considerations pressure museums to ignore property rights
 - D.** internationally renowned institutions earn their reputations by resolving disputes fairly

Refer to readings III and IV to answer question 25.

Use the following quotations to answer question 25.

“I still routinely see that woman’s shocked face in the corner of my mind. Skaay’s face, since we do not have a photograph, is one I have to imagine. Hers is a face I will never forget.” (Reading III, lines 56 to 58)

“Mr. Wilson was always troubled, if not haunted, by a sensation of something missing.” (Reading IV, lines 17 to 18)

25. Which of the following statements **best** expresses the idea that is common to the quotations above?
- A. We must not repeat our past mistakes.
 - B. History teaches us how to empathize with others.
 - C. Our independence relies on our ability to relinquish the past.
 - D. Our ability to maintain a connection to the past influences our well-being.

- V. Read the collage on page 11 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 26 to 28.

26. The maps in both the background and foreground of the collage reinforce the
- A. success of conservation efforts in the Ottawa Valley river basin
 - B. importance of land re-development to the Ottawa Citizen reader
 - C. magnitude of regional population growth within the Ottawa area
 - D. proximity of archeological sites to contemporary residents of the Ottawa area
27. The headline “Bones of contention” is appropriate in that it effectively captures the fact that
- A. scientific evidence is conclusive
 - B. local residents face difficult decisions
 - C. burial site excavations are commonplace
 - D. stakeholders in the issue have opposing views
28. Which of the following search listings generated by the Internet query “Algonquin settlements” would provide the **most relevant** background information on the topic represented by the collage?
- A. The French Algonquin Alliance—Fur Trade
 - B. Fur Trade Towns of the Ottawa Valley Watershed Vol. 1
 - C. The Ottawa and Rideau River Waterway—Human History
 - D. The Algonquin Provincial Park . . . Wolves roam this historic site

Refer to readings III, IV, and V to answer question 29.

- 29.** Which of the following research questions would readings III, IV, and V address?
- A.** Why are people fascinated by their ancestry?
 - B.** Who owns the anthropological treasures of North America?
 - C.** Why should modern science shape interpretations of cultural history?
 - D.** What did European explorers think of the aboriginal people they relied on?

VI. Read the excerpt from a Shakespearean play on pages 12 to 15 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 30 to 38.

- 30.** The dramatic function of lines 3 to 7 is to
- A.** reveal the similar nature of each king's quest
 - B.** create confusion about each king's identity
 - C.** immediately establish the kings' rivalry
 - D.** suggest the kings' diplomatic restraint
- 31.** The contrast in each king's use of the word "loving" (lines 5 and 6) is that whereas King John establishes himself as imperial, King Philip suggests that King John is more
- A.** mature
 - B.** egalitarian
 - C.** threatening
 - D.** authoritarian
- 32.** King John's use of sleep imagery in "winking gates" (line 18), "sleeping stones" (line 19), and "beds of lime" (line 22) serves to reinforce
- A.** his single purpose and that of King Philip
 - B.** the belief that evil can be overcome with goodness
 - C.** his warning against complacency in the face of peril
 - D.** the contrast between English and French military might
- 33.** King John's words "To save unscratched your city's threat'ned cheeks" (line 28) emphasize, through use of
- A.** irony, that the people of Angiers are brave
 - B.** alliteration, that the people of Angiers are vain
 - C.** metaphor, that the people of Angiers are confident
 - D.** personification, that the people of Angiers are vulnerable

Continued

34. Juxtaposition is used for effect in the quotation
- A. “The cannons have their bowels full of wrath” (line 13)
 - B. “Have brought a countercheck before your gates” (line 27)
 - C. “instead of bullets wrapped in fire, / To make a shaking fever in your walls, / They shoot but calm words folded up in smoke” (lines 30–32)
 - D. “your king, whose labored spirits, / Forwearied in this action of swift speed, / Craves harborage within your city walls” (lines 35–37)
35. In line 33, “faithless” means
- A. deceitful
 - B. irreligious
 - C. discordant
 - D. irresponsible
36. In his speech in lines 9 to 37, King John attempts to persuade his subjects by appealing to their sense of
- A. anger and sense of defiance
 - B. loyalty and sense of jeopardy
 - C. honour and sense of obedience
 - D. independence and sense of responsibility
37. King Philip refers to Arthur as “Son to the elder brother of this man” (line 42) **mainly** to
- A. emphasize Arthur’s lineal right to the English crown
 - B. create antagonism in Angiers toward King John
 - C. arouse the sympathy of the people of Angiers
 - D. remind King John of his filial duty
38. King Philip’s threat to the citizens of Angiers is **most chillingly** represented in the words
- A. “Our cannons’ malice vainly shall be spent” (line 54)
 - B. “Which here we came to spout against your town” (line 59)
 - C. “Can hide you from our messengers of war” (line 63)
 - D. “And stalk in blood to our possession?” (line 69)

VII. Read the excerpt from a novel on pages 16 to 20 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 39 to 48.

39. The detail “The bungalow on wheels from his childhood had shrunk” (line 2) serves to indicate
- A. the progress achieved in India
 - B. a shift in Maneck’s perspective
 - C. Maneck’s restricted point of view
 - D. the symbolic function of the setting
40. In lines 11 to 14, the juxtaposition of what Maneck sees and what he thinks reinforces that he is
- A. young
 - B. strong
 - C. empathetic
 - D. sophisticated
41. The details in lines 46 to 48 reinforce that the relationship between the young woman and Papaji is one of
- A. strained civility
 - B. cloying affection
 - C. barely suppressed hostility
 - D. all-consuming protectiveness
42. In lines 64 to 65, the proofreader’s response to Maneck’s question reveals his
- A. volatility
 - B. reticence
 - C. pride
 - D. fear
43. The proofreader’s fondness and care for his pens are **best** understood as being
- A. a comforting link to his former life
 - B. an expression of his fear of thieves
 - C. an extension of his habitual tidiness
 - D. a depressing manifestation of his illness

Continued

Use the following quotations to answer question 44.

“The letters sailed before my eyes, line after line, orderly fleets
upon an ocean of newsprint” (lines 101–102)

“What about rivers, would the tears from twelve hundred
million eyes cause them to rise and flood?” (lines 149–150)

“In twenty-four years of proofreading, flocks of words flew
into my head through the windows of my soul” (lines 165–166)

44. In context, the above quotations serve to reflect the proofreader’s
- A. kindness
 - B. practicality
 - C. love of control
 - D. love of language
45. In this excerpt, the primary purpose of the reference to and quotation from Yeats in lines 128 to 129 and lines 177 to 180 is to
- A. introduce the notion of a fine balance
 - B. suggest the precarious nature of life in India
 - C. suggest the futility of our attempts to prevail
 - D. contrast with the proofreader’s poetic temperament
46. The metaphor in lines 154 to 156 that is used to describe the disintegration of the proofreader’s sight implicitly refers to
- A. text and columns
 - B. letters and waves
 - C. sailors and weather
 - D. sailors and columns

47. The suggestion of the possible consequences of not suppressing normal behaviour is emphasized in
- A. "I'm not denying that I often felt like weeping at what I read" (line 125)
 - B. "Aeroplanes falling from the skies, trains going off the tracks, boats sinking, buses and lorries and cars crashing" (lines 141–142)
 - C. "No, it's too dangerous" (line 151)
 - D. "What can anyone do in such circumstances? Accept it, and go on" (line 177)
48. The dominant irony in this excerpt is expressed by
- A. Maneck's assumption that the man beside him "had a preference for speaking softly" (line 17)
 - B. the young woman's assumption that Maneck and the proofreader "just have no manners" (line 74)
 - C. the proofreader's observation that a bad habit of his is the use of "these silly phrases instead of good English words" (lines 90–91)
 - D. the proofreader's observation that "The nectar that nurtured me had turned to poison" (line 175)

VIII. Read the excerpt from a play on pages 21 to 25 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 49 to 62.

49. In the context of the play, the question in line 1 “How can I thank you, General, for your protection?” is ironic **mainly** because
- A. Napoleon’s bravery is available to all without repayment
 - B. Napoleon is not chivalrous and is motivated by self-interest
 - C. the Lady was placed in dire danger by one of Napoleon’s men
 - D. the Lady’s frailty left Napoleon little choice but to offer assistance
50. By disguising herself as a man (lines 6 to 7) and “pretending to cry” (line 13), the Lady reveals her
- A. hypocrisy
 - B. sentimentality
 - C. miscalculation
 - D. resourcefulness
51. Napoleon’s blunt “Yes” to the Lady’s reproof “General: do you threaten women?” (lines 26–27) indicates his
- A. hostility toward all women
 - B. disdain for the Lady’s strength
 - C. concern for the equality of women
 - D. indifference to established conventions
52. In lines 49 to 51, the Lady is temporarily daunted because
- A. her ploys seem ineffective
 - B. her fear becomes overpowering
 - C. she resigns herself to her weakness
 - D. she sees that Napoleon is distracted
53. Napoleon announces that he will accompany the Lady to her chamber (line 54) **mainly** because he
- A. is insensitive
 - B. knows she is lying
 - C. wants to assert his control
 - D. is determined to find the papers

54. The Lady claims that her demand should be granted (lines 67 to 69) because
- A. Napoleon's reputation is threatened
 - B. Napoleon's reputation is secure
 - C. the demand is relatively minor
 - D. the demand is reasonable
55. The contradiction between Napoleon's statement "It is fear that makes men fight" (line 106) and his statement "I was afraid to interfere" (lines 109 to 110) reinforces his
- A. self-centred nature
 - B. essentially honourable nature
 - C. tendency to behave irrationally
 - D. dedication to his nation's cause
56. According to the Lady, a "womanish hero" (line 139) is one who
- A. acts on the basis of emotion
 - B. acts in the interest of others
 - C. has no pride when fearful
 - D. has no other choice
57. The description "*petulant listlessness*" (lines 149 to 150) indicates that the Lady's manner is
- A. sulky and unenergetic
 - B. hostile and indifferent
 - C. obstinate and vigorous
 - D. casual and unsympathetic
58. The underlying dramatic purpose of the Lady's affecting interest in Napoleon (line 158) is to
- A. reflect her submission
 - B. reveal her inner conflict
 - C. demonstrate her passive nature
 - D. reinforce her manipulative skill

Continued

59. The dramatic irony created through Napoleon's use of the expression "little one" (line 165) reinforces his attitude of
- A. pride
 - B. altruism
 - C. compassion
 - D. condescension
60. In context, the stage directions in lines 134 to 135 and in lines 162 to 165 serve to
- A. emphasize Napoleon's strength of character
 - B. reinforce the transparency of Napoleon's posturing
 - C. reflect the contrast between Napoleon's and the Lady's status
 - D. suggest Napoleon's shyness and timidity in the presence of women
61. The Lady's statement "it is easy to see that you have never tried it" (lines 169 to 170) implies that Napoleon's
- A. character is suspect
 - B. world-view is narrow
 - C. leadership is exemplary
 - D. nationality is insignificant
62. The central irony in this excerpt is that
- A. Napoleon, a subject of France, respects the viewpoints of an employee of Italy
 - B. in convincing the Lady that she is courageous, Napoleon fails to perceive the significance of her courage
 - C. in attempting to dominate others, Napoleon reveals his true strengths
 - D. Napoleon, the great soldier, sacrifices himself for the country

IX. Read the poem on pages 26 to 27 of your Readings Booklet and answer questions 63 to 70.

- 63.** That the child tolerated his mother's influence is conveyed in the phrase
- A. "those long weeping slumbers" (line 2)
 - B. "she was / there" (lines 2–3)
 - C. "suffered her eagerness" (line 9)
 - D. "a long / adventure in the country" (lines 14–15)
- 64.** The mother's habit of naming and categorizing creates in her son feelings of
- A. ignorance and confusion
 - B. anxiety and frustration
 - C. camaraderie and pride
 - D. comfort and security
- 65.** The contrast between the boy's feelings about birds and his mother's feelings about birds is figuratively conveyed by the quotation
- A. "a long / adventure in the country, for her sake" (lines 14–15)
 - B. "He had no wish to separate them in groups / or learn the latin" (lines 24–25)
 - C. "Birds were his element like air and not / her words for them" (lines 30–31)
 - D. "She gave him pictures which he avoided" (line 38)
- 66.** The boy disregards the pictures that his mother gives him (line 38) because
- A. he has no wish to travel
 - B. he prefers art to the precision of photography
 - C. the pictures remind him that he is inexperienced
 - D. the pictures are a poor substitute for his personal experience

Continued

67. In the lines “shyness like his own / soft in the silence” (lines 19 to 20) and “their wings within his blood” (line 45), the poet effectively uses alliteration to reinforce the
- A. underlying cruelty of nature
 - B. need of boys and birds to fly
 - C. delicateness of the local wildlife
 - D. tenderness of the boy’s identification with birds
68. The mother’s tendency to influence or control her son is **most directly** implied in the quotation
- A. “she was / there” (lines 2–3)
 - B. “Birds were familiar to him now” (line 18)
 - C. “Ah, the swifts” (line 29)
 - D. “But when most surely in her grasp” (line 51)
69. The phrase that captures the complexity of the boy’s attitude toward his mother is
- A. “the air about them—hers and his—” (line 4)
 - B. “sometimes a comfort to him, like a quilt” (line 5)
 - C. “Like every mother’s boy he loved and hated” (line 46)
 - D. “Without my mother’s help . . .” (line 53)
70. The dream described in lines 54 to 66 serves to reflect the son’s
- A. acknowledgement of the generosity of his mother’s guidance
 - B. unwillingness to submit to his mother’s expectations
 - C. awareness of the breadth of his accomplishments
 - D. childhood tendency to fantasize